Yume No Kodoma

-Volume 3 Part 1-

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Essence of Purity

Essence of Purity

just another BL scanlation site...

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Title: Yume No Kodomo
Mangaka: Hamaka Shouko

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100% pure like

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100% pure Seme

When it comes to love: the 'package' isn't that important!

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夢の子供

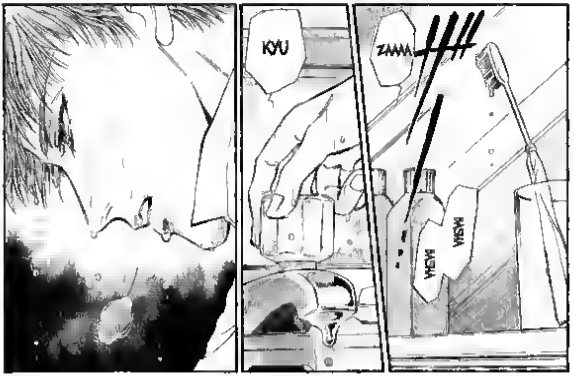
Yume no Kodomo

Hamada Shouko

浜田翔子

EP

Yume no Kodomo
夢の子供
ユメノコドモ
★STEP.3★


KYU
ZAAA
HASH
HASH

I can't pretend
that everything
didn't happen

EP

STORY

DUE TO HIS SISTER SENKO'S WORK CIRCUMSTANCES, YOUJI HAS TO LIVE TOGETHER WITH SENKO'S CLOSE FRIEND AKISHIMA REN. BUT THE FIRST IMPRESSION HE GOT FROM FACING REN WAS THE WORST. ALSO HE WAS GIVEN A NEGATIVE RESPONSE ABOUT THE NOVEL THAT WAS WRITTEN BY MISAKI RENA WHOM HE RESPECTED. YOUJI KEEPS HAVING CONFLICT WITH REN AFTER THAT. BUT DUE TO SOME EVENT, YOUJI FOUND OUT THAT REN WAS ACTUALLY MISAKI RENA AND AFTER LIVING TOGETHER FOR QUITE SOME TIME, GRADUALLY THEY OPEN UP TO EACH OTHER.
AND ONE DAY, REN'S FORMER LOVER, HIROSE TAKUYA, APPEARED ONCE AGAIN IN FRONT OF REN. THOUGH SAYING THAT HE LOVED BOTH REN AND SENKO. HE MARRIED ANOTHER WOMAN. BUT, HIROSE TOLD REN THAT HE STILL LOVES HIM AS HE DRAWS NEAR. YOUJI SPOTTED REN WHO WAS TREMBLING. WENT TO HIROSE'S HOUSE LOOKING FOR HIM BUT INSTEAD HE WAS PROVOKED BY HIM AND BECOME CONSCIOUS OF REN AND WHEN HE WAS KISSING HITOMI, HIS GIRLFRIEND. HE REALIZED HE WAS THINKING ABOUT REN. REALIZING THIS, YOUJI UNINTENTIONALLY/UNCONSCIOUSLY CONFESSED TO REN THAT HE LOVE HIM. BUT REN DIDN'T ACCEPT YOUJI'S CONFESSION AND WAS TRYING VERY HARD TO RECOVER BY HIMSELF AND EVEN NOW HE COULDN'T FORGET HIROSE AND KEPT HIS HAIR LONG THE WAY HIROSE LIKED IT. YOUJI, WHO WAS GETTING ANGRY BY THIS, CUT REN'S HAIR IN FURY AND NOW

AKISHIMA REN
HE'S A FREE WRITER BUT BEFORE THAT, HE WAS A NOVELIST. PRODUCED A LOT OF HIS WORKS WITH THE PEN NAME MISAKI RENA.

TAKAMASHI YOUJI
2ND YEAR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT. GOOD WITH ALL THE HOUSEWORK. CURRENTLY LIVING TOGETHER WITH REN. BIG FAN OF NOVELIST MISAKI RENA.

HAYASAKA HITOMI
A BRIGHT AND CUTE GIRLFRIEND OF YOUJI MAKING A YOUJI&HITOMI COUPLE BUT KEEPING IT SECRET FROM YOUJI.

HIROSE TAKUYA
FORMER LOVER OF REN AND SENKO. NOW MARRIED AND ALSO FATHER OF A CHILD BUT PERSIST ON CONTINUING A RELATIONSHIP WITH REN.

HITA
The wind was always blowing but
I feel like I've even forgotten about it

When was the last time I felt the blueness of the sky...?
Chose carefully after you've discussed it with your family
Fill it in and submit it by next week
That is it for today
Oh yeah... I'm going to be 3rd year already
GATA
GATAGATA

First and foremost I don't have time for this....
I never even thought about the future seriously yet and
course...
I don't have time for that
Why don't we drop by the game center on the way back
Hey Taka mash!
Say what you want
to do alone
That's why guys with girlfriend are so
what's up with you you don't have sexual excitement

Youji!
Hiro mi
To-day
Where is Mi shiba?
What am I going to say?
Aya-chan said she had things to do
And went back early
How do I... begin to talk about it?

What to do – I can't say it
And
Then Aya chan she s so mean
I can feel that my determi- nation is weakening –
What s wrong Youji? You re looking weird today
Eh – mm yeah I guess
It can't be like this, can it?
I don't want to hurt her
Oh yeah!
Here look!

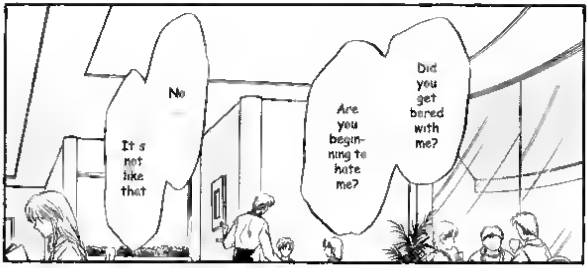
EP

So
Hiromi
What?
I want to wear the ring you gave me every-day but
If the school finds out it'll get confis-cated
Looks like I kept talking all by myself
Oh sorry
I can't... If this goes on...!!
You said you had some thing to talk about right?
But. How?

Hiromi, I m sorry but that ring
Can you give it back?
So What is it?
Eh ..?
Saying that We re breaking up?
Are you
I want the ring back
Just now What did you say?

I'm sorry
The reason
Please tell me

Hiromi
But
You just bought me that ring
It was just recently
If you say that suddenly
I can't agree without knowing the reason


No
It's not like that
Are you beginning to hate me?
Did you get bored with me?

Totally one-sided
The person did not even take me seriously
Or should I say
And that person like you too..?

Then
Do you like
Somebody else now?

Emmm
Yeah

Yeah
Acting like an adult and treating people like brats. In the beginn ng I only thought about how ir-ritating that person was
Is it an older person?
And treats me like a brat
The it can t be help
Then I became curious
I just couldn t stand to see that person hurting inside se badly
Is it
I knew it could not be but
Youji

Ren-san?
Yes
BANG!
Yes
Seri-ously?

Let s go out
I want to take a walk
Hiromi
It was here right?
Last time Ren san was quarrelling with that guy named Hirose
Erm ...
Yeah

And Ren-san was forcefully kissed by Hirose-san
Don't talk about Hirose
What's that kind of person?
As I thought
Somehow I thought that he was that kind of person
Ren-san and Hirose-san had that kind of relationship that time right?
Isn't it?
Ren-san is hurting badly even now
Because of Hirose-san right?

Isn't that sympathy?
Or is it because Ren-san is "Misaki Rena"?
You might have confused it with admiration and then.
No... It isn't like that
But Youji, Ren-san is a man
That's homosexuality
I guess it is

I can't understand home or gay and
I didn't think about love or passion at all
I just like him and
I want to do something for him...
Even so
If these words are the words to describe how I feel about Ren then
It can't be helped I guess

You like Ren-san that much?
It might not even be mutual
You are not even taken seriously
Even so, you still want to break up with me
You like Ren-san more than me
Because
So... I can't say it properly but
What is not like it?
Wait a minute
It's not like that Hiromi

I don't really know it myself
It could be the same "like"
It could be different
It can't be compared
It's not that I like him better than you or comparing which is more and which is less...it's not like that
So
I... can't do it
But
To continue to go out with you with this halfhearted feelings like these
What...?
Yuji
You are the worst

If you're saying it like that... I don't know what to think
Can't you just say that you don't like me anymore
You are too honest
You are an idiot
Oh
Sorry
Idiot!!
Why don't you do what you want then!
I won't forgive you if you try to stop me!
Hiromi
EP

The ring
She forgot to give it back
She'll probably just throw it some where
I guess
It's better that way
I was prepared that She was most probably going to cry ...

I didn't know anything about her
But she looked at me directly and didn't even turn away
I even did pitiable things for that ring

DING!
DONG!
Yes?
Is it Ren-san?
My name is Hayasaka, Hayasaka Hiromi -
We met once at the park
Yeah- Yuuji's ...
Hold on just a minute

What's the matter?
!!
Yeah
Erm
You've cut it
Your hair
Do you want to wait inside?
Yuuji isn't back yet but
No

What?
This
You want me to pass this to Youji?
What is it?
It's not for Youji but
It's for Ren-san

It's just a modest pestering
I want to give it to you
Please accept it
Goodbye!
EP

click
EP

I'm home
WHO
BANG!
Welcome back
You're pretty late

Sorry
I'll start cooking once I've changed my clothes
Ren
You're not working today?
Not right now
Hmm
I see

I'm done
I will go make some tea what kind do you want?
Earl grey
Okay
And
When we enter 3rd year the classes are formed by different course and it seems necessary

Even so asking us to choose our future at this age
That's so unreasonable
Well it's not like that will decide our entire life though
Yeup!
Did something happen?

Hmm
Haya-saka Hiro-mi
Was it?
Ah !!
Nothing in particular
Give it back!
Why do you have it
Whoops!

It was given to me
Hiromi came here!?
Said it was just to "pester" you
What happened?
Yeah
Broke up?
We broke up

Really
!!
Youji!
You
You don't have to get that angry
I'm shocked
Actually
!!!

Something about you liking me and get drifted by the temporary confusion and
Broke up with your girlfriend?
What were you thinking
Did you think that I m going to take you seriously because you broke up with your girlfriend?
I didn't mean it that way...
When was it
The first time I met her and you met Hirose
Do you remember what I've said at the playground
Erm ...
Yeah

To not hurt her I said
Yeah
Never betray and
betray no one
That time I asked you to take good care of your girlfriend and
That's right
That time Ren looked very helpless and
Maybe that was the beginning

To live without hurting anyone no one can do it
All the more when there's someone you like
But Ren
That's impossible
That—I wouldn't have realized it if it weren't for this incident
But
So it's okay even if you hurt your girlfriend
Is that what you went to say
That it's okay?
But it can't be helped
Because I helped
Can't be helped?
END

Do you knew how she felt when she came here
You
SHUDDR
You have no right to say that to me!!
I know it's just my selfishness!
And I understand that I've hurt her with that selfishness!
It's okay even if you think that I'm fine with all that..

I just
But
To make my break up with Hiromi as a reason such as 'so please like me' or stuff like that— I have no intention of making it such material
Wanted to confront you face to face

So my words can reach straight to you...
Or at least

"What" you asked
I only like you, Ren
And
What do you want me to do?
I just like you.

EP

Then have it your way
What?
Ren...!?

Even if you know I'm a man and still you have interest in me then
I will at least be your sex partner
If you want to touch me
Then go ahead and touch me.
EP

You want to hold me?
Or you want to be held?
Ren!!
But in return
Do not expect
Any-thing else from me
Re...n

EP

Not going to run away?
Like last time ...
END

Close them
Your eyes
Ren

POUF!
SHOVE

Wha
What's wrong
You suck.

W——
Well I'm sorry!
You Idiot——!!
Tch——!!

Click!
click!
Click!
click!
CLICK
Click!
Click

Please accept it
I went to give it to you
It s just u modest pestering
I like Ren

Too straight-forward
Till I am going to be defea-ted
Click! Click!
Click! Click!
cluck!

EP

DING!
DONG!
Huh?
Taka-
oshi
Hiromi is in P.E. class I see...

Erm
Yeah
Even if it's time for afternoon nap, you shouldn't sleep with your eyes open
You
Not "huh" music lesson is finished already
Oh
The girls are having P.E. outside
I see, he was fascinated by his beloved Hiromi-chan
What's wrong?
Lately you've been spacing out a lot
Nothing really

Idiot
It's nothing like that
Come to think of it
Lately Hayasaka stopped dropping by to our class
Yeah I think so too
She'll at least show up once a day right Takanashi?
Are you guys quarrelling?
Erm Yeah
Something like that
Oh no!
I forget
Book
What?
I was thinking about doing it home and left it in the table in the music room
left it outside...
ED

We'll head to classroom first
I m going to get it back
yume
MISAKI MENA
There it is
ED

I still can't stop liking it
Although Ren said it's fake
I reread it so many times, books written by Misaki Rena.
I want to protect Ren...
I want to heal Ren's wound
That's what I say but –
"Children of Dreams" / 'Yume no kodomo"
'Winter Solitare' / "Fuyu no Sekita"
Since that happened, I didn't properly meet Ren face to face again
We live in the same room but somehow we always manage to miss each other...As if it's
'One Dime Dream" / "One Dime no Yume"
EP

Those harsh words of rejection
Do not expect anything else from me
Am I being avoided
I guess so
On purpose...?
But maybe I'm just pushing him into a corner...
I thought he didn't want to be defeated
วิ่งไวๆ

I won't think that I made the wrong choice
I don't... want to.
ばったり!

Hiromi
How re you?
Uh.. I mean.. umm
Don't talk to the girl you just dumped in such a calm and unruffled way.
Idiot
Ah--
TURN

That's why I told you not to stick your nose in
What?
Is that so bad?
you MUMMY'S BOY!
THWACK!
Yeah it's bad! You've already made your decision haven't you?
You know
I won't say anything against you and Akishimo-san being in a guy-guy relationship but
Making Hiromi cry is a serious crime.
Hiromi cried at Machiba's place.
Oh I see

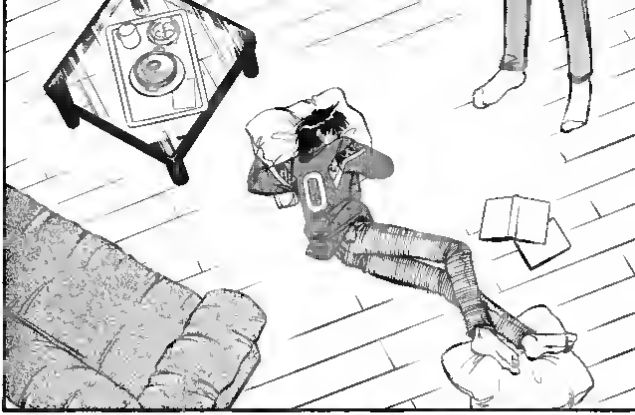
I hurt her
I made
her cry
We can't return,
can we?
Back to
being friends
I'm
be ng
selfish
arent I
— for a
second time?
And yet—
She'll still keeping
her head up
to face the world.
That's got to
be painful.
BD

How many days has it been,

Without seeing each other?

But somehow, it seems that there's been neither progress nor retreat
I thought if I took the first step, something might change
What
What on earth am I going to do?
I— If nothing has changed, I can't do anything
too much to take
Some how
this is all becoming

TAP
TAP
TAP



To Ryan
In case you come
back tonight, there's
beef stew you can
warm up
Yuuji
ZZZ...

Uh n
Ren
Huh...?

The schedule was changed
A dream isn't it
You said you wouldn't be back before tomorrow afternoon.
Why are you here ?
HUG
Youji?
Ren...
Ren
Ren...
Ren...

SMILE
It really is a dream after all
But even if it's a dream that's okay I won't complain...
There's no way Ren would give me such a gentle kiss in real life
I never wanted to hurt anyone
What the correct thing to do was
What I should have done what I wanted to do
Somehow I I thought that I understood but I don't!
Bom

And at the same time as causing pain to Hiromi, all my actions
have been driving Ren into a corner, and only hurting him more and more.
I didn't think I would ever hurt a girl like that
But in the end I made Hiromi cry
Being hated- being avoided too
but still liking that person
Knowing that that will definitely cause them even more pain
but being unable to stop feeling that way
Somehow, somewhere along the line...
Did I get the whole thing wrong?

So pessimistic.
That's not like you
POUF
The things you do aren't hurting me or anything
So you don't have to be so scared
You didn't get anything wrong

Then that's okay, Youji
Because there is no correct path to take
So warm... Feels nice
Getting lost... or taking the roundabout way
Even if not a single thing goes well
Aah...
So it can feel this good when Ken is being gentle
If only this weren't just a dream...

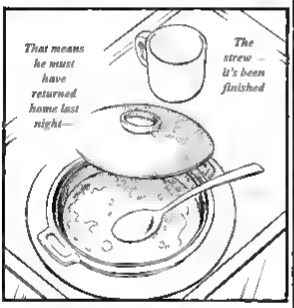
BRUSH
RRRRR...

CLICK
Hello Akishima speaking
Aah yes...
No...that's not a problem. Yes I will make preparations tonight
Tomorrow morning...
It's at 6am isn't it?
yes

CLICK
I understand
Thank you
SMILE
What a pretentious thing to say
toss
Getting lost,
or taking the
roundabout way
Because there is
no correct path
to take

Youji
Is going to be angry, isn't he
I want to think that it isn't but
Is this "running away"...?

SUDDEN AWAKENING
Huh..?
When did I get in my bed?
about Ren.
I had a dream
STREEETCH
Must be wishful thinking
So weird
A dream about a gentle Ren


That means he must have returned home last night—
The stew — it's been finished

JERK

Somehow feels like the first good night's rest I've had in a long time
Must be cuz of the lack of sleep I've had recently

There's no way that could really have happened!
It can't be
that was a dream!
But
That...
I wonder if he's sleeping
Ren— There's no signs that he's here now

Ren you...
Idiot
?
Flutter
To you
Away on business
Will return in 10 days
Ren
Ten days??
What's that supposed to mean!?

Hayasaka Hiromi san
Haya-saka-san
Who are you?
I'm Sakai from 2-B class
Sakai Hisashi

Hey, Takanashi
Ten days
Today's the third day
One more long week to go
Ah sorry
I'll hand it in on Monday
You're the only one who hasn't handed in your class survey sheet yet
It's way past the deadline for submitting them!
what
you still haven't made up your mind?
Uhm- no
It's just... you know about the future... I haven't really
You'll still be minding us in your education, right?
Yeee- oh
Since we have to decide before we move to 3rd year
Just write down any old university name!

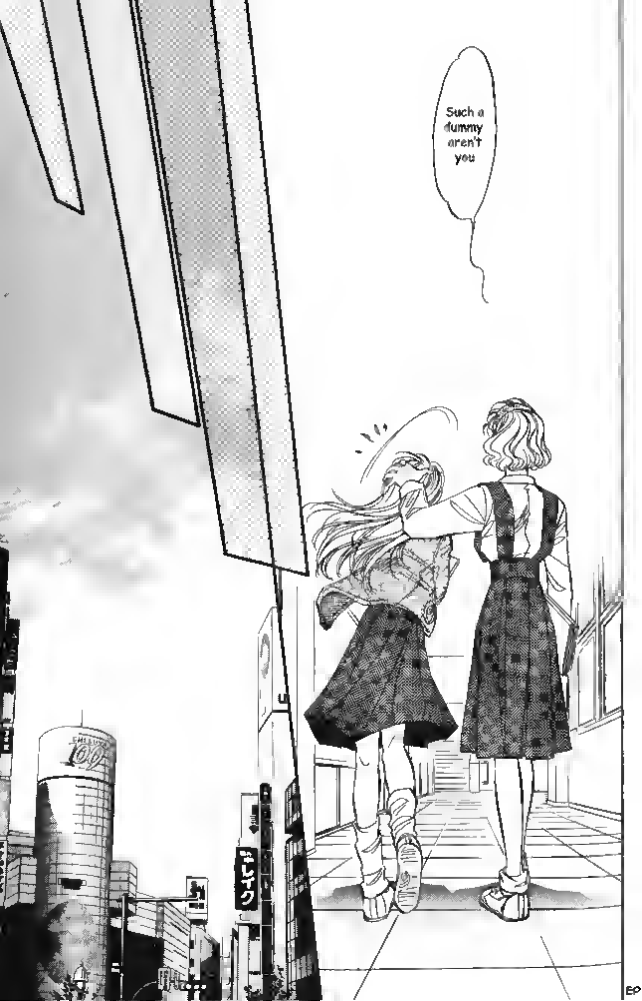
Being susceptible to kindness and gentleness because one is lonely is dangerous territory. Hiromi
So spill it
You two going out? You and that Soka
Not really
He's just a friend Someone kind and gentlemanly with whom I can go to the movies with kind of thing
Oh what are you saying Aya
It's nothing like
JERK
OH BEAT

すっ
Say Takana-shi
It's real difficult to ask this but
What?
I was just wondering... if it wasn't just a fight you had with Hayasaki... that is.
If you guys have really split up...?

Rumours —?
What'd you mean by that?
Looks like the rumours were true then
So that's why you've been so useless lately
Ah
Well yeah I guess you knew already
There're a lot of guys who'll be after her now
You probably didn't realise but Hayasaki's pretty popular
Everyone's been keeping an eye on it
I see...

Did he mention anything about Ren-san?
What did he say?
You talked in the corridor, didn't you?
Say, Aya...
What did you and Youji talk about after?
After ?
Do you care?
I mean... why even that guy? With that boring drab face of his!
saying "There's somebody else I like"
That jerk dumped me!
But...

I was dumped!?
For the sake of someone like that...
It's none of my business anymore
It's not like I'm going to ask
Ne—
No way! Why me?
How should I know? If you care so much you should ask him yourself
Aya...
you're so cold!
If that's the case why don't you hurry up and forget about Takanashi already
Do me a favour and go date Saga or something

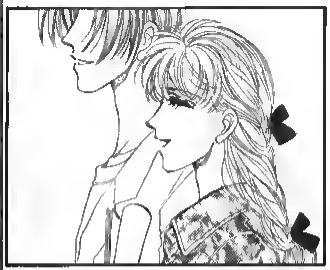

Such a dummy aren't you

BRUSH PAST
I'm such an idiot

That's okay, Yuya
That truly was a dream, wasn't it
I don't care even if it's just in dreams
You didn't get anything wrong
Because there is no correct path to take
I want him to say that one more time right now!!

Where are you right now?
Even just catching sight of his face would be enough for me
I miss him
When being alone is such a hard thing for you

GET IT TOGETHER, YOUJI!
WITH CIRCUMSTANCES LIKE THESE, HOW AM I GOING TO PROTECT ANYONE FROM ANYTHING?
HOW PATHETIC --
LAUGH
CRAFE



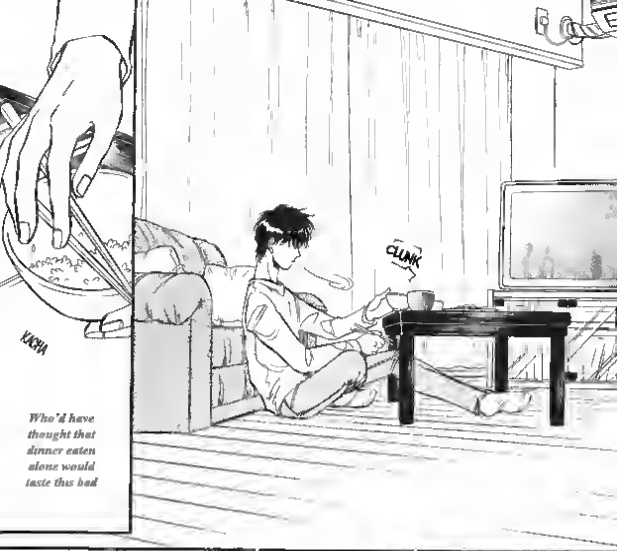
Hrmm.
she's
laughing

Right.

When it came to family trips or outings, I'd make up some feeble reason as an excuse in favour of kicking back and relaxing. But those weren't "lonely" nights.
Though, if I had to say
"Loneliness"... at this age, it's probably the first time for me
to understand the meaning of the concept

It'd still be...
In the mix of people of a neighbourhood I didn't know, that palm slipped from my grip and I lost sight of his shape in the crowd.
Even forgetting to cry, my eyes just desperately searching for a familiar back
I stretched out my hand with all my might, to properly reach the height of my father's palm
The situation now— seems to resemble the feeling from that time

DOESN'T TASTE GOOD...
chew chew...


KACHA
CLUNK
Who'd have thought that dinner eaten alone would taste this bad

WHAT A PAIN...
SQUEAK

It's not like he's running from me
It's just his job... he didn't do it on purpose
It can't be helped — I know that
Each time leaving these brief, business-like notes
And only about his work
Away on busine
Back in 10 da
I know that — I know that, I know that
But still
Leaving things half-resolved like this
While my anxiety only keeps on building
My mind is just so edgy and impatient
I know —
That it's just my own selfish disappoint--ment

REN..
WHERE ARE YOU?
HAHH...
"What if Ren won't return here anymore ...?"
PANG

CLICK
REN!!
ABACHI-SAN...
YOU JUST TOOK ONE, DIDN'T YOU
I DID

Yes, yes
THAT FACE OF YOURS
WAS JUST ASKING FOR IT
EH?
IT'S "THE LANDSCAPE OF THE INNER MIND" THAT YOU SHOULD BE TAKING PICTURES OF, ISN'T IT?
WHAT'S THE POINT OF TAKING PICTURES OF ME?
TWO YEARS HAVE PASSED ALREADY AND A LOT'S CHANGED
WELL, ANYWAY
CLAP
JUST NOW... YOU HAD A REAL NICE EXPRESSION ON YOU
IS THAT...
RIGHT?

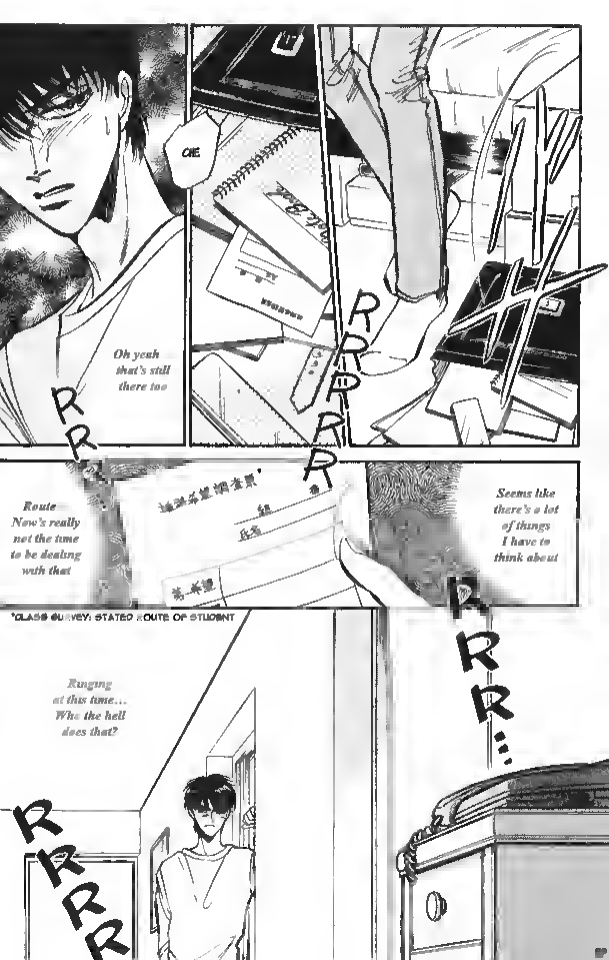
That was ...
TOMORROW WE'LL BE GIVING OUR LEGS A LOT MORE EXERCISE, AFTER ALL
LET'S GO BACK TO THE LODGE
THERE'S DINNER TO EAT AND LOTS OF STUFF TO DO LET'S GET A MOVE ON

I leaped at the jumper of the father I'd finally found
!!
Some festival or other
It was really crowded
Back then
Both had the same jacket on
THAT WAS...
A COMPLETE STRANGER

Because I'm lonely? Because I'm feeling forlorn?
WHY AM I THINKING OF IT NOW... THIS KIND OF
"RECOLLECTION" IS WHAT THEY CALL IT THOUGH I CAN'T REALLY REMEMBER IT CLEARLY
I wonder what would have happened to me
With great timing Senko came, pulling father along by his arm. If she hadn't come to find me
Such a memory abruptly being revived
Suddenly being left completely on my own, like being abandoned Is this my anxiety—?

That's right ... it resem-bles that time
This sense
As if, in this whole world, there isn't a single person who loves me ... that there's only emptiness
The one thing that's different from back then is that this time round there's no Senko or father to come looking for me
That's right ... There is no-one there for me
Not Ren ——— Not Hiro-mi

Right now, I'm completely alone


CRE
Oh yeah... that's still there too
RRRRRR
RRR
Route... Now's really not the time to be dealing with that
Seems like there's a lot of things I have to think about
'CLASS SURVEY: STATED ROUTE OF STUDENT
Ringing at this time... Who the hell does that?
RRRRR
RRR...

HELLO. TAKANA-SHI -
I MEAN, AKISHIMA RESIDENCE.
!
SENKO!
YEAH.
I'M GREAT
YOU, TOO
SOUNDING AS LIVELY AS ALWAYS!

I DON'T KNOW!
REN..?
NO UM... HE'S NOT HERE RIGHT NOW
THERE WAS JUST A MEMO SAYING HE'D BE AWAY FROM HOME FOR 10 DAYS...
I THINK MAYBE IT'S SOME KIND OF MATERIAL OR NEWS GATHERING TRIP BUT...
WHAT'S WITH THAT?
DID YOU ONLY CALL BECAUSE YOU HAVE SOME BUSINESS WITH REN?
EH—
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...
YEAH..
YEAH, I GET IT
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M... IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT
AH!
AH, HEY SENKO UM ARE YOU EATING PROPER MEALS?
HOW'S YOUR MOOD?
IS YOUR JOB OKAY?

WHAT?
WHAT'S THIS SO SUDDENLY
I'M JUST SAYING... YOU NEVER USED TO ASK ABOUT ALL THOSE THINGS, DID YOU?
YOU MIGHT HAVE SHOWN SUCH WORRY BEFORE I MOVED AWAY FROM JAPAN, YOU KNOW
CRACK
WELL, I DID THINK EVEN CLINGY YOU-CHAN WOULD EVENTUALLY ACHIEVE INDEPENDENCE FROM HIS BIG SIS...
AREN'T YOU EVEN JUST A TIDDY BIT LONELY?
OH MY... I REJOICE IN THAT KNOWLEDGE!
THAT IT'S ONLY CUZ I'M NOT THERE THAT YOU'VE GOTTEN LONELY, IS THAT IT?
TO BE SO CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR DEAREST SENKO ONEE-SAMA, YOU-CHAN'S LOVE IS— AH, OR COULD IT BE
giggle
giggle
giggle

BUT YOU KNOW, A PARENT IS A PARENT. SO...
I'D REJOICE EVEN MORE IF YOU DEPENDED ON THEM A LITTLE FROM TIME TO TIME
THAT MIGHT BE SO, BUT...
I WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT TO CONSULT THEM ON DON'T KNOW ANYTHING MYSELF
NOW'S NOT REALLY THE TIME TO TALK ABOUT THIS. MY HEAD IS ALREADY SPINNING WITH SO MUCH STUFF RIGHT NOW
HU-R... WELL, THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE AT THAT AGE.
OH YOUNG MAN WHO ART BESET BY TROUBLES OF LOVE!
—YE AH.
SOME-THING LIKE THAT
AH, UN NO
IT'S NOT REALLY ABOUT HIROMI
ARE THINGS NOT GOING SO WELL WITH HIROMI-CHAN?
WHAT? A DIFFE-RENT GIRL?
DID YOU COMPLETELY BREAK UP WITH HIROMI-CHAN?

AHAHAHA!
YES, YES
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE QUITE SO EAGER TO DENY IT!
SO WHAT IS IT?
THE THING THAT'S TROUBLING YOU
U-HU. WELL, THE THING IS, SENKO... EEERM... WELL—
I HAVE TO FILL IN A SCHOOL FORM ABOUT WHICH ROUTE I'M GOING TO TAKE FROM NOW ON.
FORM—!?
THAT'S THE KIND OF STUFF THAT'S TROUBLING YOU!? JEEZ, SERIOUSLY...
YOU CAN ASK ME ABOUT THAT BUT I WON'T KNOW THE ANSWER
MAYBE YOU'RE FORGETTING THAT YOU HAVE YOUR OWN PERFEC--TLY HEALTHY PARENTS
I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN, BUT...
TO PHONE ALL THE WAY TO IWATE JUST FOR SOMETHING LIKE THAT IS A BIT...
YEAH... I GUESS THAT'S TRUE
YOU'VE BEEN THE TYPE OF CHILD THAT DOESN'T DEPEND MUCH ON HIS PARENTS FROM THE VERY BEGINNING
PROBABLY BECAUSE THOSE TWO HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE IRRESPONSIBLE, NON-INTERFERING KIND TOO, HUH

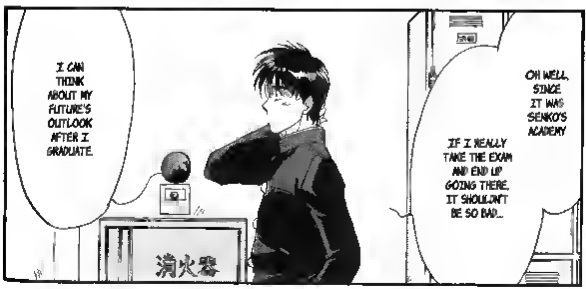
I SEE
YEAH...
I KNOW THERE'S A LOT ON YOUR MIND NOW BUT PLEASE TREAT LOVE WITH SERIOUSNESS AND HONESTY YOUJI
WELL? WHAT KIND OF GIRL IS IT? THIS IS A DIFFICULT AGE FOR GIRLS TOO, SO IF IT'S ABOUT THAT I CAN GIVE YOU PLENTY OF ADVICE
But it's not a girl
I'M GOING TO HANG UP
YOUJI! JEEZ...
NAH... THAT'S...
FORGET ABOUT IT INTERNATIONAL PHONE CALLS ARE EXPENSIVE, SO...
HEY YOU! DON'T TRY TO WEASEL OUT OF IT!
AND ONE MORE THING!
YEAH...
PLEASE GIVE DAD A RING OKAY?
WHAT?

It's no good !
But this isn't !
Right now, even Senko didn't find me…
I LOVE YOU
GOOD NIGHT
CLICK
TOOT… TOOT… TOOT…
YOU TOO…
SENKO
That's right no matter if we're separated, or if we can't see each other
Family, at least, will always love you, and be loved in return

AS IF.
IT'S "LITERARY ARTS"
N UNIVERSITY'S ART FACULTY?
WHAT. YOU CAN PAINT PICTURES? AND SCULPT AND STUFF...?
KIND OF I SUPPOSE...
THAT'S THE REASON THAT YOU'VE CHOSEN IT...?
WELL, SHE WAS A FINE ARTS STUDENT BUT...
THIS IS THE PLACE THAT SENKO... THAT MY SISTER WENT TO
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO ADD THAT...
DESPITE YOUR APPEARANCE
PHYSICS, MATHS. THOSE ARE YOUR STRONG POINTS AREN'T THEY?
I HAD YOU PEGGED AS THE NUMERICAL TYPE

HEY GOING TO THE NEXT BEST UNIVERSITY'S GOOD ENOUGH, BUT THIS GUY HAD TO GO OVER THE TOP
DID YOU KNOW?
THIS GUY WROTE DOWN HIS GREATEST AMBITION
WHAT?
IS THERE SOME-THING WRONG WITH THAT?
ANYWAY IT WAS YOU WHO TOLD ME TO PUT DOWN ANY OLD UNIVERSITY TAJIMA
UH, I GUESS I DID
I just wrote down "University" Tim
TAKANASHI?
WHAT ME'S NEGLECTED TO MENTION IS THAT IT'S TOKINOMIYA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT..
I'M GOING TO GO HAND THIS IN
SHUT UP — AIMING HIGH IS THE IDEAL ISN'T IT?
HYHYHYH

Staff Room
BATAN!
In the end I didn't call my father after all
I just wrote down the first university name that I happened to think of
However, the place that I seriously decided on in my childhood
This is the same talk as the time I was convinced of "becoming a novelist", but


I CAN THINK ABOUT MY FUTURE'S OUTLOOK AFTER I GRADUATE.
消火器
IF I REALLY TAKE THE EXAM AND END UP GOING THERE, IT SHOULDN'T BE SO BAD...
OH WELL, SINCE IT WAS SENKO'S ACADEMY

WAIT A SECOND...
SEIKO'S ACADEMY THAT WAS REN'S ACADEMY AS WELL...
AND IN THE END
WASN'T IT HIROSE'S TOO?
PUTTING ME OFF
Somehow, that's slightly, no, completely
10 days huh, today's the 6th day.
So until Ren comes back it's another 5 days, if I include today—
WAH...
OOPS-

I'M SORRY!!
UWAH!
UHHUM.
ARE YOU O... KAY...

That's the guy...

YEAH...
MORE OR LESS

IT'S NOT LIKE THAT WAS ENTIRELY YOUR FAULT JUST NOW

SORRY TO ASK, BUT COULD YOU LEND ME A HAND WITH THIS?
YOU DEFINITELY LOOK LIKE YOU ARE
ARE YOU FREE RIGHT NOW?
COME TO THINK OF IT
That's the guy who was together with Hiromi on Sunday— in Shibuya
LIBRARY
What's up with this guy
EH..?

WHAT.
NO-ONE HERE?
NOTHING FOR IT I GUESS
Y'KNOW, I THOUGHT
THAT BEING A LIBRARY COMMITTEE MEMBER WOULD BE A PIECE OF CAKE
I NEVER IMAGINED IT'D HAVE TO SACRIFICE MY LUNCH BREAKS FOR THIS STUFF
NOT LIKE I DISLIKE READING BOOKS OR ANYTHING
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I WASN'T CUT OUT FOR THIS AFTER ALL
HEY, I...
I'M GOING TO GET GOING NOW
OKAY... THANKS FOR GIVING ME A HAND
TAKAHASHI-KUN

DID YOU HEAR THAT... FROM HIROMI?
IF CLASS'S TAKAHASHI YOUJI, RIGHT?
VERY ACCOMPLISHED WHEN IT COMES TO PEOPLE WHO ARE OLDER THAN HIM
WHY... DO YOU...
YOU COULD SAY THAT
"THE BOYFRIEND I WAS GOING OUT WITH STARTED LIKING SOMEONE OLDER, SO WE BROKE UP"
...WAS THE GIST OF IT
I'VE BEEN CHECKING HAYASAKA HIROMI OUT FOR WHILE NOW
AND I GOT INTERESTED IN WHAT KIND OF GUY THAT BOYFRIEND OF HERS WAS

YOU LOOK LIKE THE QUIET BIDDABLE TYPE, DON'T YOU?
FOR SUCH A CUTE GIRL TO BE DUMPED BY YOU... THAT MEANS SHE MUST HAVE A CORRESPONDING PERSONALITY HUH?
HOW FAR DID YOU GET WITH HER?
YOU... THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS
IT'S NOT "YOU"
THE NAME'S SAKAI
SAKAI HISASHI FROM 2-B CLASS
YOU DON'T HAVE TO REMEMBER IT
BUT, WHATEVER

Not that I'm in any position to comment about that sort of thing right now
For her to tell him about the break-up, in the all-out movie...
Does she like that guy?
What an asshole
Hiromi's going out with someone like that?

GGI...
HIROSE
It's got to be cursed. Definitely cursed!
Oh man, what a day

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, YOUJI-KUN
NOT LONG ENOUGH
WAIT
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I'M REALLY NOT IN THE BEST OF MOODS RIGHT NOW

WHERE IS REN?
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE...
GET YOUR HANDS OFF!
LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE THE SAME PROBLEM
WHAT A COINCIDENCE
HMMM...

I DO KNOW I KNOW EVERY--THING WHEN IT COMES TO REN. WHEN AND WHAT HIS SCHEDULES ARE AND WHAT KIND OF WORK HE DOES FOR THE PUBLISHING COMPANY I KNOW IT ALL!!
BUT DESPITE THAT I HAVEN'T RECEIVED ANY NEWS FOR THE LAST WEEK, SO I CAME TO HEAR IT FROM YOU
IF IT'S ABOUT REN,
THEN I THINK YOU PROBABLY KNOW MORE THAN ME, RIGHT--?
WHERE HAS REN GONE TO?
I HAVE NO IDEA
HE WENT NEWS GATHERING FOR HIS JOB SOMEWHERE
HUH
SO WHAT YOU'RE REALLY SAYING IS THAT IN THE END YOU DON'T KNOW AS MUCH AS YOU'D LIKE TO THINK...

IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!!
AH...
GOOD AFTER-NOON
BOW
Couldn't you just have gone to that park from before in the first place?
LET'S CHANGE LOCA-TION
IT'S JUST GOING TO CAUSE TROUBLE TO HAVE YOU SHOUTING AROUND HERE LIKE THAT

GRABBING HOLD OF A HIGH-SCHOOLER WITH SUCH AN AGITATED EXPRESSION DOESN'T SEEM MUCH LIKE ADULT BEHAVIOUR TO ME
AFTER HITTING A DEAD END TODAY, WHAT ARE YOU GETTING THIS PANICKY ABOUT?
YOU KNOW... I'VE JUST ABOUT HAD IT UP TO HERE WITH THAT UNCONCERNEDLY CONFIDENT, "BEHOLD THE GREAT ADULT THAT IS ME" ATTITUDE OF YOURS
I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT. IT'S TRUE THAT I'M NOT ONE TO GET FLUSTERED.
I JUST CAN'T STAND THIS UNEASINESS. NOT KNOWING SHIN'S WHEREABOUTS... SOMEHOW... HE... WHAT IF HE...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT

UP TILL NOW I'VE BEEN ABLE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT HE'S BEEN DOING AND WHERE HE'S BEEN DOING IT
IT'S JUST... WELL, IT'S AS I SAID BEFORE. ACQUAINTANCES FROM WORK, SENIORS AND JUNIORS FROM UNIVERSITY... THANKS TO THOSE CONNECTIONS I WAS ABLE TO KEEP TRACK OF HIM IN THE BUSINESS WORLD.
IT'S NOT THAT I'M UPSET BECAUSE I CAN'T SEE HIM
UP TILL NOW YOU HAVEN'T HAD A SINGLE ENCOUNTER THAT WENT WELL
NOT BEING ABLE TO FORCE A MEETING FOR AT MOST ONE WEEK'S DURATION... WHAT ARE YOU SO UPSET ABOUT?
WELL THEN, IT'S SIMPLY WORK FOR A NEW MAGAZINE THAT YOU DON'T HAPPEN TO KNOW ABOUT
ALMOST, YES
EVERY-THING, HUH

THAT MAY BE TRUE...
HOWEVER,
ALL THE WORK THAT I KNEW ABOUT HAS NOW BEEN CANCELLED BY HIM
EH..?
HE SETTLED ALL THE URGENT MATTERS AND CURRENT JOBS AT HAND AT A TIGHT PACE, AND SAID HE'D TURN DOWN ALL THE LONG-TERM FUTURE PROJECTS.
THAT WAS EXACTLY ONE WEEK AGO.
Wh what...? Why...?
WHY...
DID HE DO SUCH THINGS ...?
THE DISCONTINUATION OF HIS PUBLISHED REGULAR COLUMNS IS ALSO BEING DEALT WITH
AND NO PLANS TO RESUME IT ARE IN SIGHT

What in the world is going on here?
Cancelled...?
"DISAPPEARANCE"
YOU KNOW WHAT THAT WORD MEANS, RIGHT?
Discontinuation of his publishing—? No plans to resume—?

ARE YOU SAYING "THAT" IS WHAT REN'S DONE?
THINKING THAT IT MAY BE POSSIBLE IS WHAT MAKES THE APPREHENSION I'M FEELING SO INTOLERABLE
THINKING HE'S NOT GOING TO RETURN HERE ANYMORE, IS HE?
ABANDONING EVERYTHING TO ESCAPE
FROM YOU...
FROM ME...
AND FROM REALITY... THAT IS SURELY HIS INTENTION, IS IT NOT?
What is this man saying—
About Ren, this guy has no—!!
EVEN THEN, AT LEAST HE'D STILL BE ALIVE
HOWEVER... WHAT IF...
IF THE WORST CASE SHOULD...

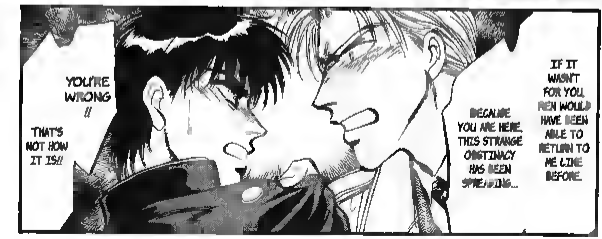
HE ISN'T SOMEONE TO RUN AWAY LIKE THAT
STOP TALKING NONSENSE
WHAT KIND OF REN HAVE YOU BEEN SEEING UP TILL NOW?
HE HAS FLED FROM YOU...
FLED FROM THE PAST BEFORE. THAT MUCH IS TRUE. BUT HE'S BEEN ABLE TO HOLD OUT AND RESIST IT

BECAUSE YOU PERSIST IN CHASING REN
BECAUSE YOU'RE HURTING HIM
I LOVE REN! HE NEEDS ME!!
WHY CAN'T YOU ACCEPT THAT?
RESIST——?
WHY? WHEN THERE IS NO NEED FOR IT
ISN'T IT YOU WHO NEEDS TO START ACCEPTING THE TRUTH?

DIDN'T YOU KNOW?
REN IS STRONG
HE'S STRONG ENOUGH NOT TO NEED ANYBODY'S HAND
WHAT CONFI-DENCE
AND JUST SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU UNDERSTOOD SO MUCH ABOUT REN?
TO BE TELLING ME THESE THINGS SO KNOWLED-GEABLY...
YOU'RE TALKING AS IF IT'S SOLELY I WHO IS CHASING AFTER REN
WHAT ABOUT YOU, THEN?

I'M... DIFFE-RENT
JUST EXACTLY WHAT IS SO DIFFERENT?
YOU LIKE REN, DON'T YOU?
I WOULD NEVER HURT HIM LIKE YOU HAVE!
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO WITH REN?
WHAT DO YOU DESIRE FROM HIM?
BUT HE WON'T RESPOND DOESN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING
AND SO WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO?
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE WOUNDS I GAVE HIM?
LIKE HIS WEAKNESS OF THE FACT THAT HE CAN'T SEVER THE CONNECTION BETWEEN US AGAINST HIS?
OR IS IT...!!

TO MAKE USE OF THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL TO HAVE IT YOUR WAY BY FORCE!?
YOU'RE SUCH A...
NO MATTER HOW YOU TRY TO SUGARCOAT THE FACTS, IN THE END YOU AND I ARE THE SAME, ARE WE NOT? TO THE EXTENT THAT REN HAS NO INTENTION OF ACCEPTING YOU!
YOUR VERY PRESENCE ALONE IS DRIVING HIM AWAY. AM I WRONG!?


IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU, REN WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RETURN TO ME LIKE BEFORE.
BECAUSE YOU ARE HERE, THIS STRANGE OBSTINACY HAS BEEN SPREADING...
YOU'RE WRONG !!
THAT'S NOT HOW IT IS!!

I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE'S GONE, BUT
THERE WAS A MEMO SAYING HE'D BE RETURNING IN 10 DAYS' TIME
REN IS COMING BACK!!
IF IT'S POSSIBLE THAT REN, FOR A SECOND TIME...
IT'S YOU THAT REN'S ESCAPING FROM. THAT'S IT ISN'T IT?!
THE ONE THAT'S BEEN DRIVING REN AWAY ISN'T ME! IT'S YOU!

Y'KNOW, YOU SAY SOME PRETTY IRRATIONAL THINGS
HE DECIDED HE WOULD BE RETURNING BECAUSE REN NEEDS ME
10 DAYS...
IS THAT IT... I SEE...

IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT TO THINK, GO RIGHT AHEAD
NOBODY BUT REN WILL KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT
REN...
ISN'T GOING TO RUN OR ANYTHING I'M SURE OF THAT
スー

I would say this, but
How dare he say those things with such confidence
But the uneasiness is growing, and there's nothing either of us can do about it...
DAMN IT...

DI--NG
DO--NG
but
It's possible that that guy is right
That Hirose doesn't have an inch of faith in Ren. It really makes me sick.

んぐっ
TAKANA-SHI!
WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING AT
GIGGLE
WHAT'S THIS? WAYYY?
HAVE YOU FINALLY GONE ROUND THE BEND?
IDIOT LEMME GO!
IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT

Gather up
WHISTLE
HEY, B-TEAM, YOU'RE BEING CALLED
YOU'RE UP NEXT IN THE GAME
ACK...
QUICK, LET'S GO
ARE YOU OKAY, TAKANORI
EH?
SO HE SAW...
MAN, s-how-please getting a new guy this soon after a mid- break-up
HAAAH ?!?
I'M REAL HAPPY
FOR HER TO STILL LET ME SEE EXPRESSIONS LIKE THAT
BUT EVEN THAT'S CUTE, DON'T YOU THINK?
THAT PART OF HAYASAKA HIROMI

TO ALWAYS GIVE ME ALONE THE BLANK TREATMENT...
NOT TRYING TO REALLY SEE ME
DOING HER BEST TO PRETEND I DON'T EXIST ANYMORE. TO THE POINT WHERE MY PRESENCE MIGHT VANISH COMPLETELY FROM BEFORE HER EYES
I'M TALKING WEIRD, BUT TO SEE HER LIKE THAT WAS REALLY PAINFUL
SO GIVING ME A RESPONSE LIKE THAT JUST NOW
IS PROGRESS IN MY BOOK
EH, ME..?
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE MAYBE CHEERED UP A LITTLE, TOO
HM. WELL, IF YOU SAY SO.
WELL YEAH, SINCE ALL OF LAST WEEK YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU JUST WANTED TO CRAWL INTO A CORNER AND DIE

Surely things will continue changing in this way, day by day, little by little
I really made him worry, didn't I...
I'M SORRY
THANKS, TAJIMA
watch
Talking, or rather fighting with Hirose it made me so mad
What a strange conversation
At least now I've dealt with that, I'm able to start thinking about the other stuff again

CLINK...
AH, GOT IT
EVENING PAPER'S HERE TOO
HMM
KEY KEY
RUSTLE
AH...
Today's the 10th... day...
SLAM
DINNER...
I HAVE TO MAKE DINNER!
Ren's coming home!!
The world will keep on turning

EXCITED
EXCITED
I wonder what time he'll be coming back
Been a while since I made proper use of the kitchen
Sukiyaki should be perfect
I CAN'T BELIEVE I FELL ASLEEP...
UGH...
SNEEZE!
NN...
REAL...
STILL HASN'T COME BACK YET HUH

YAWN
OH WELL
I'M TURNING IN FOR THE NIGHT
In the morning, surely...
HIS PLANS MUST HAVE BEEN EXTENDED
I SHOULD HAVE JUST EATEN INSTEAD OF WAITING
IT'S EVENING ALREADY
HE'S LATE!

I want to be there to welcome him back when he returns, I guess
BUT
I DON'T KNOW WHEN REN IS GOING TO RETURN...
What time will it be? Maybe he'll phone to let me know
I ended up eating one portion of what I made for breakfast and lunch
I'M STARVING
COLLAPSE
I have to go shopping there's no ingredients or anything left in the house
RRRR
WHAT AM I IMAGINING
Erg
My heart? Newlywed?
WHAT AM I SAYING
IT'S LIKE I HAVE THE ANXIOUS HEART OF A NEWLYWED WIFE!
Haha!

HELLO?
REW?
IS THAT YOUJI-KUN?
HAS REN STILL NOT RETURNED?
HIROSE ...
YOU SAID HE'D BE BACK IN 10 DAYS
I THOUGHT THAT MEANT HE'D HAVE RETURNED HOME YESTERDAY
WHAT ARE YOU CALLING FOR
IF HE HAD, I WOULDN'T TELL YOU
I SEE..
SO HE HASN'T COME BACK YET HMM
LISTEN, YOU...
NO, I'M SORRY
I APOLOGISE FOR MY BEHAVIOUR DURING THIS TIME
I GOT SOMEWHAT EMOTIONAL, AND SAID TOO MUCH. I'VE SINCE REFLECTED ON THAT..
IN RETROSPECT I TRULY WASN'T BEING VERY ADULT ABOUT IT ALL

I'VE BEEN THINKING
THAT THERE IS NO WAY I'LL BE ABLE TO MAKE THIS UNEASINESS JUST VANISH
TH-UMP
I THOUGHT I'D TRY CALLING TODAY EVEN IF I WOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO SPEAK TO REN. I'D HAVE BEEN GLAD JUST TO KNOW HE HAD RETURNED
IF YOU COULD UNDERSTAND THAT I WAS JUST VENTING THAT FRUSTRATION AND UNEASINESS, THEN—
WELL...
WHAT'S WITH THAT PITIFUL TONE?
HE MAY BE A LITTLE LATE, BUT HE ALREADY DECIDED HE'D BE RETURNING. DIDN'T HE?
YES...
SORRY BUT
WHEN YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING NEW, COULD YOU PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH ME?
NO WAY
WHY SHOULD I GO TO ALL THAT TROUBLE FOR THE LIKES OF YOU?
WOULDN'T IT BE EVEN MORE OF A BOTHER TO RECEIVE PHONE CALLS FROM ME, EVERY DAY EVERY HOUR?
...I GET IT ALREADY
EVEN WORSE
I do want that hand for it, erm
THANK YOU...

All he ever says are things that make myself start to feel uneasy
GRRRRRR...
Damn it! That bastard Hirose
ガチャ!
I DON'T KNOW...
I'M REALLY GETTING WORRIED
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?
REN MADE HIS MIND UP TO RETURN, DIDN'T HE?
I wonder if he won't come back after all...
HE WILL COME BACK!
SHAKE SHAKE
But, for real, what if
it stays like this, without him coming back

What about Katsumi-san
If I tell Senko about this, with so much uncertainty I'd only succeed in making her worry too
Um
Um
Um
Um
Ah, but I don't know her phone number
And by the time I get to her bar, Ren might have already returned here
Who else...

But that shouldn't include Seiji Publishing
BUSINESS CARD...
Hirose was only talking about the publishing companies that Ren was currently doing work for
I SHOULD HAVE THE BUSINESS CARD HERE...

THAT'S
KATORI-SAN!!

OKAY
HERE GOES NOTHING
FIRST AND FOREMOST, THE POSSIBILITY OF HEARING "HE'S NOT DOING ANY WORK FOR US" AND "I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT" IS HIGHER THAN ANY OTHER
But there might be something that he knows
AND ON A SATURDAY, TO BOOT
THERE PROBABLY WON'T BE ANYONE IN THE OFFICE AT THIS TIME...
GOT IT!!
TAKANASHI? U—M ...AH
YES, THIS IS KATORI SPEAKING
HELLO, SEIJI PUBLISHING BOOKS DEPARTMENT
YOUJI-KUN?

DIDN'T YOU HEAR FROM AKISHIMA-SAN?
OH? WELL, YES... UM...
SO, WHAT'S WRONG? YES
EH?
AKISHIMA-SAN'S WHERE-ABOUTS?
AH... YES. I'M WAITING FOR A MANUS-CRIPT
THOUGH PUBLISHERS SHOULDN'T REALLY HAVE MUCH TO DO WITH THAT ON A SATURDAY!
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT IT???
I DO
HE WENT ON A NEWS GATHERING TRIP TOGETHER WITH A PHOTOGRAPHER. THEY SHOULD BE IN EUROPE, SO...
EUROPE !?

MANY YEARS AGO MY JOB AT THE PUBLISHING COMPANY WAS GIVING PRESENTATIONS
SO I KNOW THAT FOR A MAGAZINE LIKE THIS, WHERE THE WORK ROTATES ALMOST HOURLY GREAT IMPORTANCE IS ATTACHED TO VISUALS
I didn't hear anything about him going to a foreign country!
I definitely didn't hear anything about that!
WELL, I WAS GOING TO SAY IT'S ADACHI T'NAGASHI, BUT YOU MUST KNOW HIM ALREADY, RIGHT?
AT PRESENT THE PHOTO-GRAPHER THAT AKISHIMA-SAN HAS TEAMED UP WITH IS...
I HAVEN'T HEARD OF HIM...
AHHA... WELL, THE TRUTH IS I'M NOT TOO FAMILIAR WITH HIM EITHER, THOUGH HE'S RATHER WELL-KNOWN IN THIS BUSINESS
IT SEEMS THAT WHEN ADACHI-SAN ACCEPTED THE REQUEST TO GO THE PLANS WERE MADE IN A PRETTY HURRIED FANTION
REQUEST ?

Europe... Someplace that isn't Japan...
PLEASE EXCUSE ME YOUJI-KUN, BUT I'LL HAVE TO GO NOW
OH, IT LOOKS LIKE A FAX HAS ARRIVED
Pimp
THAT'S RIGHT SINCE THEY GET ALONG WELL
THOUGH THERE ARE SOME GOOD JOBS HE LEFT BEHIND
CLICK
IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN IT'D BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO RUSH TO SUCH A PLACE TO HELP, WOULDN'T IT
What is he thinking, making me even more apprehensive than before
Why did he remain silent about something that involved going abroad—
If something were to happen?
EUROPE'S JUST TOO BIG
FRANCE
GERMANY
AUSTRIA
HUNGARY

What if
A. AHA. HA...
I'M BEING STUPID... WHAT THE HELL AM I THINKING ABOUT
He might not come back here anymore
If it's like this
SQUEEZ
From the very beginning, he never intended to return?
Like this... isn't how it was supposed to turn out!

Just a little longer and Ren might arrive back home
I have to go to school, but...
TODAY...
IS MONDAY ISN'T IT...
Come on just follow my lead and ring ring-ring-ring-ring
ring-ring, ring-ring
ring-ring
Or he may at least make a phone call

ring-
ring
ring-
ring
ring-
ring
ring-
ring
WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING?
IDIOT
FOR CRYING OUT LOUD
ARGH!
Or else I'll brood myself to death
I'M SO HUNGRY
BETTER GO TO KATSUMI-SAN'S BAR, JUST IN CASE
TURN
CLINK CLINK
CLICK

ARE YOU ON YOUR WAY OUT SOMEWHERE?

YOUJI...

YOUJI...?
PHILIP
ドサ…
DON'T CRY AT YOUR AGE
IT'S TOO SHAMEFUL
pat
I-
I'M NOT CRYING-!
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU, EVEN, YOU STUPID JERK!
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO COME BACK AFTER 10 DAYS! AND THERE WEREN'T EVEN ANY WAYS TO CONTACT YOU!

PFFT!
GRRRRRR...
TH— THAT'S BECAUSE TEENS MAKE ONE EVEN MORE HUNGRY
RUN
I SKIPPED GROCERY SHOPPING AND THERE ISN'T ANYTHING EDIBLE LEFT IN THE HOUSE
WILL YOU STOP LAUGHING ALREADY!
hahahehehe...
OKAY OKAY, I GET IT
IN THAT CASE LET'S GO TO "CANAL"
CANAL
WHAT'S "CANAL"

WELCOME
OH, IF IT ISN'T REN! AND YOUJI-KUN, TOO
PING-PONG
CANAL
I didn't even notice that until now
OH I SEE...
SO THAT'S THE NAME OF KATSUMI-SAN'S BAR
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE GETTING ALONG WELL NOW
WE'RE NOT GETTING ON AT ALL! LISTEN TO THIS KATSUMI-SAN
HE TOOK OFF FOR MORE THAN TEN DAYS WITHOUT SAYING A WORD ABOUT IT BEFOREHAND... AND THEN WHEN HE WAS TWO DAYS LATE IN RETURNING, HE DIDN'T EVEN DEIGN TO MAKE A SINGLE PHONE CALL HOME ABOUT IT!
MY MY...
I THOUGHT... THAT HE WOULDN'T COME BACK THIS TIME

MOST IMPORTANTLY, IF SOMEONE'S PLANNING ON TRAVELLING TO A FOREIGN COUNTRY, THEY SHOULD AT LEAST SAY SO BEFORE GOING
IS THERE ANY REASON WHY I SHOULD GIVE YOU PRIOR NOTICE ABOUT EACH AND EVERY THING I DO AS PART OF MY JOB?
Giggle giggle
OKAY
IN ANY CASE, THIS ONE'S HUNGRY
COULD YOU MAKE HIM UP SOMETHING? ANYTHING'S FINE
An... then an orange juice and... mineral water, please
SULK
WHAT?
STILL HOPING?
IT'S GOOD THAT YOU'VE RETURNED IN ONE PIECE
NOT REALLY...
Hmm ...?
Somehow Ren's expression seems to have gotten a little softer

I FOUND IT AT A FLEA MARKET IN VIENNA
OH?
THIS IS FOR ME?
GOBBLE GOBBLE
.....
THANK YOU! I'M SO HAPPY
He's really returned for good
Thus isn't just my imagination, right?
HIROSE ...?
WELL, ER... HE CAME ROUND BECAUSE HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU TOO
AND SO... I KINDA PROMISED TO TELL HIM WHEN YOU RETURNED...
AH!
CLATTER
WHAT'S WRONG?
PHONING HIROSE
I COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT
Nghuhhh Lumi it's just

B-BUT... EVEN IF IT'S SOMEONE LIKE HIROSE, TO BREAK A PROMISE IS NOT GOOD!
AND HE'S REALLY, SERIOUSLY WORRIED
YOU DON'T NEED TO CALL HIM

UM.
SORRY FOR JUST DOING THAT BY MYSELF

Ren
has changed?
He hasn't just become gentler— he's also become— stronger

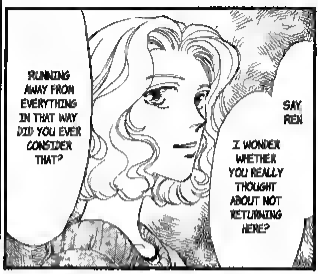
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT
I'LL CONTACT KIM MYSELF

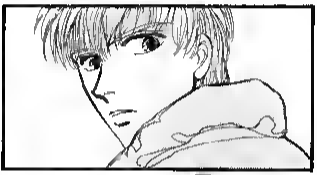
A strong will — A strong expression
Did something happen that allowed him to start moving on? Something in Europe?
This must be the hidden face of the real Ren — the one that he's been suppressing until now...
OH DEAR! IS IT ALREADY YOUJI-KUN'S BEDTIME? IT'S ONLY HALF PAST SIX!
DON'T DROP YOUR FACE INTO YOUR PLATE
OI, YOUJI
DROOP

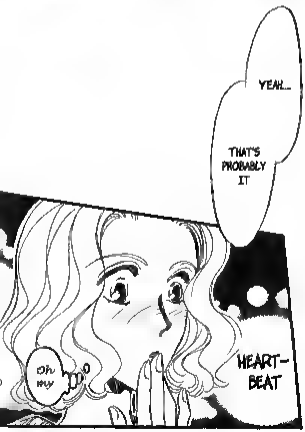
HEY!
ゴゴ
NNN
UGH
CAN'T
COME ON, PULL YOURSELF TOGE-THER
HEY DON'T FALL ASLEEP!
OH MAN
WHY IS IT THAT YOU ALWAYS END UP FALLING ASLEEP WHEN WE GO TO THIS PLACE?
I CAN'T HELP IT. CAN I...
TOMMY... 'SSALL REN'S FAULT. ANYWAY...
SHOULD I CALL A TAXI?
YEAH
PLEASE
...WAS WORRIED ... LASS' NIGHT ...
COULDN'T CATCH EVEN FIVE MINUTES OF SLEEP...

Z
REN
THE TAKI'S HERE
AH,
THANKS
C'MON, WAKE UP YOUJI!
NN...
CUTE, ISN'T HE? PARTICULARLY WHEN HE'S THIS SLEEPY-LOOKING
IT'S GOOD TO KNOW THAT THERE ARE STILL PEOPLE IN THE WORLD WHO WORRY ABOUT OTHERS TO THIS KIND OF EXTENT
IT'S MORE OF AN ANNOYANCE THAN ANYTHING
giggle giggle

OH REALLY
WAS THAT BECAUSE YOUJI-KUN WAS HERE WAITING FOR YOU?
I DIDN'T EVEN THINK OF DOING THAT MYSTERIOUSLY ENOUGH...


SAY, REN
I WONDER WHETHER YOU REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT NOT RETURNING HERE?
RUNNING AWAY FROM EVERYTHING IN THAT WAY DID YOU EVER CONSIDER THAT?




YEAH...
THAT'S PROBABLY IT
OH MY
HEART-BEAT

VROOOM
HM——M...
BUT THEN AGAIN...
IF I THINK ABOUT IT... THAT'S A PRETTY GOOD TRAIT FOR HIM TO HAVE
HE'S SUDDENLY BECOME QUITE A BIT MORE EASY-GOING
TAKE CARE ON YOUR WAY HOME
GOOD NIGHT!
WELL THEN, GOOD NIGHT

CANAL
What am I saying? There's no way right.
haha ha—
WHAT'LL YOU DO, SENKO...?
THIS MIGHT BE A TINY BIT DANGEROUS —
HU— UM...
Before Youji-kun's unrequited love, that wasn't a problem. But now—
Ren's been absolutely staying away from getting a new partner

ROLL
NH...
MM?
AH...
EH?

Ren!?
Ren's room —?
Ren's bed——!?
WH WH WH
WHY?
HOW?

WHY AM I SLEEPING HERE?
WH-
WHAT FOR?

WHAT ARE YOU BEING SO NOISY FOR?
THU-
DUMP!

BECAUSE YOU WENT AND FELL ASLEEP AT CANAL
I'M TIRED TOO, AND IT WAS JUST ALL TOO MUCH BOTHER

CALL!
WAH!!
STOP COMPLAINING AND SLEEP
—OH WHAT IT'S STILL 3AM
AND ON TOP OF IT ALL, STILL WEARING COATS...
TOO MUCH BOTHER. MY ROOM'S RIGHT NEXT DOOR, YOU KNOW

HEY...
REN
Y'KNOW, TOMAY... I HAD A 13 HOUR PLANE JOURNEY AUSTRIA, FLYING VIA RUSSIA
AND THEN FROM SAKOTA, 2 MORE HOURS BY CAR...
HAH ?

This is another dream, then, right
It's warm...
Yeah... That'd be a fitting punch-line
The weight of Ren's arm... just like in the dream, it's a good feeling

I NEVER SLEEP ON TRIPS, SO THAT JUST ADDED TO MY JET LAG...
IN OTHER WORDS — I'M REALLY, REALLY TIRED
THAT'S WHY I'M SAYING!
I'LL JUST GO TO BED IN MY OWN ROOM...

SLEEP
QUIET MAKING A FUSS!
ZZZ
ZZZ

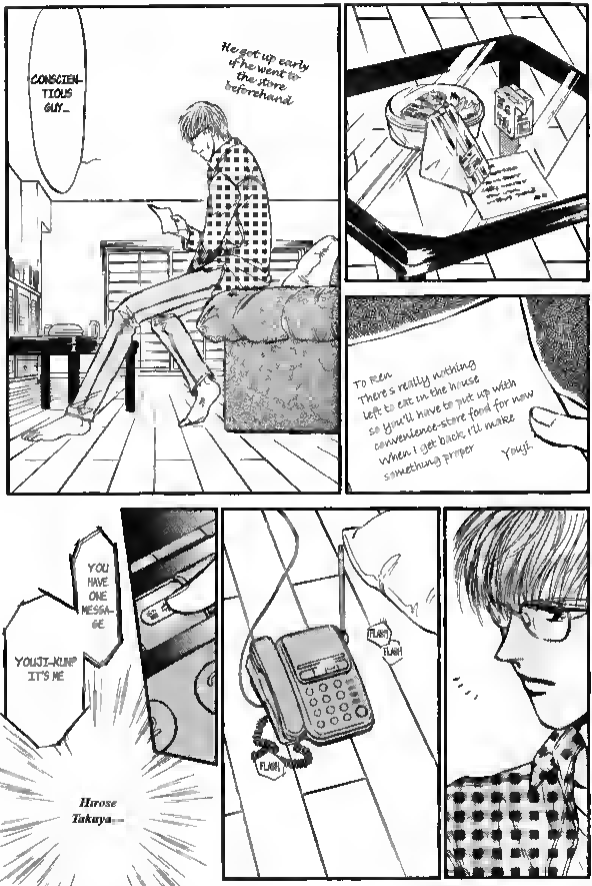
If I open my eyes now, with my heart beating like this...
Still, my heart is beating really strongly
I wonder... if this is just a dream I'm having about Ren having returned

STARTLE
MM...
YOU JIP

OWOW OW
THAT IS NOT THE MOOD HERE
QUIT THE MISCHIEF ALREADY
JUST DO ME A FAVOUR AND GO TO SLEEP
OW
JEEZ
AHAHA HA
THANK GOODNESS, IT'S THE REAL THING
WHAT'S WITH THAT?
LAUGH

He's really
come back
for good

NH
YOUJI
?
HE MUST HAVE LEFT FOR SCHOOL LONG AGO
I have to say I slept pretty well
Yawn
SLIPPING OUT OF THIS...
Like a cast off layer


CONSCIENTIOUS GUY...
He got up early if he went to the store beforehand.
To Ren
There's really nothing left to eat in the house so you'll have to put up with convenience-store food for now. When I get back, I'll make something proper
Yuuji.
YOU HAVE ONE MESSAGE
YOUJI-KUN? IT'S ME
Hirose Takuya...
FLASH
FLASH
FLASH

IF YOU NEED TO CONTACT ME DURING THE DAYTIME, THERE MIGHT BE MANY INSTANCES WHEN I AM OUT OF THE OFFICE. SO PLEASE USE MY MOBILE PHONE NUMBER INSTEAD
ALSO I FORGOT TO TELL YOU
THE NUMBER IS 090—
HAS REN STILL NOT RETURNED? AND YOU DON'T KNOW... HIS DESTINATION YET?
I'M DOING THE BEST I CAN AT THIS END TOO. IN ANY CASE, I WANT TO DEPEND ON YOU TO LET ME KNOW THE MOMENT YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING NEW
RINGG
YES
HELLO?
PIPIPIPI
KONG KONG KONG KONG
Pi
Pi
Pi
Po
Pa

YES. I AM AWARE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN WORRIED BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT I HAVE RETURNED HOME SAFELY SO...
YEAH. I HAVE BEEN WORRIED... VERY MUCH SO
THANK GOODNESS
REN...?
!!
IT'S ME

I SEE...
THAT'S WHAT IT WAS. THEREFORE...
BYE
FOR MY JOB
TO EUROPE... MAINLY AUSTRIA
WHERE ON EARTH DID YOU GO?
STAYING QUIET ABOUT IT LIKE THAT EVEN TO YOUJI-KUN...

DON'T HANG UP
REN!!
WA—
WAIT PLEASE!

I WANT TO MEET
TO MEET...
WON'T YOU LET ME SEE YOU?
ALRIGHT

SWORD ART ONLINE